United Nations ICCD/CRIC(13)/INF.1

Convention to Combat Desertification

UNCCD

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Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention
Thirteenth session
Bonn, 25–27 March 2015

Information for participants

The thirteenth session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention (CRIC 13) of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), hereinafter referred to as "the conference", will be held from 25 to 27 March 2015 in Bonn, Germany. The present document contains general information which may be helpful to participants. Additional information will be provided in due course on the UNCCD website: <www.unccd.int>.

1. Secretariat

The secretariat of the UNCCD is headed by the Executive Secretary, Ms. Monique Barbut, and based in Bonn, Germany, at:

Secretariat of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
Langer Eugen
Platz der Vereinten Nationen 1
53113 Bonn, Germany
Tel.: + 49 228 815 2800
Fax: + 49 228 815 2898/99
E-mail: secretariat@unccd.int

2. Venue of the conference

The CRIC will convene its thirteenth session from 25 to 27 March 2015 at the World Conference Center Bonn (WCCB) in the Wasserwerk and Pumpenhaus buildings. Access to the WCCB buildings will be provided to participants through the main entrance of the United Nations Campus located at the above-mentioned address.

Regional consultations of affected country Parties of the Convention's regional implementation annexes for Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, Northern Mediterranean and Central Eastern European country Parties in preparation for CRIC 13 will be convened from 23 to 24 March 2015 and will be held within the United Nations Campus.

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3. Admittance to the session

The provisions governing the Conference of the Parties (COP) apply mutatis mutandis to the proceedings of its subsidiary bodies. Participation in the conference is therefore open to Party delegations, United Nations specialized agencies and observers in accordance with the provisions of the UNCCD and the rules of procedure of the COP.[1]

Party delegations do not need to present credentials since the CRIC and the Committee on Science and Technology (CST) are subsidiary bodies of the COP. However, an official list of delegation members should be forwarded to the UNCCD secretariat before the conference session, for registration and security purposes. Observers already accredited to previous sessions of the COP should also comply with this requirement.

Any body or agency, whether national or international, governmental or non-governmental, which has not yet obtained observer status may be admitted to the conference on submission of an official request to the UNCCD secretariat, pending the decision on its accreditation as an observer by the COP at its next ordinary session. This request should state the competence or qualification of the body or agency in matters covered by the UNCCD.

4. Registration

Registration for national delegations, specialized agencies and United Nations programmes, and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, as well as for the media and staff of the United Nations, will take place from Monday, 23 March 2015 to Friday, 27 March 2015 at the main entrance of the United Nations Campus:

Platz der Vereinten Nationen 1
D-53113 Bonn, Germany

Registration will continue throughout the session on working days from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., with the exception of Friday, 27 March 2015 when registration will end at noon.

In addition to the Plenary Hall located in the WCCB, meeting rooms will be made available within the United Nations Campus, without interpretation services, for informal meetings. Arrangements for such meetings should be made with the secretariat.[2] Working hours will normally be from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and from 3 to 6 p.m.

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[1] In accordance with article 36, paragraph 2, of the Convention, for each State or regional economic integration organization which ratifies, accepts, approves or accedes to the Convention after the deposit of the fiftieth instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession, the Convention enters into force on the ninetieth day after the date of deposit by such State or regional economic integration organization of its instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession. Consequently, the Parties as at the opening of the conference on 25 March 2015 will be the States and regional economic integration organizations that have deposited their instruments by 25 December 2014. States that deposited their instruments after 25 December 2014 but by 27 December 2014 will become Parties during the session. States that deposited their instruments after 27 December 2014 will not become Parties until after the session is closed, but may participate in the session as observers. Intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental and civil society organizations and observers that were accredited at the eleventh session of the COP are listed in document ICCD/COP(11)/20/Rev.1. Relevant information on the status of ratifications is available on the UNCCD website: <www.unccd.int>.

[2] Please check the Official Journal of the session for relevant contacts.

Identity badges will be issued at the time of registration, and participants are requested to wear them at all times since access to the WCCB is allowed only upon presentation of badges.

5. How to get to the conference venue

Flights

Some airlines have direct flights to Cologne-Bonn and many others fly to Frankfurt or Düsseldorf. There are numerous train connections between the Frankfurt and Düsseldorf airports and Bonn. It may be possible to book a train ticket together with the airline ticket (travel agents may provide related information), or train tickets can be purchased at the airport railway station.

From Cologne-Bonn airport

Cologne-Bonn airport is approximately 30 minutes' drive from the centre of Bonn. Participants arriving at this airport can take a taxi or bus to Bonn city centre. Taxis are readily available; a one-way journey to the city costs approximately EUR 50. The Airport Express SB60 (bus stop at the arrival level of Terminal 1) connects the airport with Bonn's main railway station (Hauptbahnhof). The price of a one-way bus ticket to Bonn is EUR 7.70. Tickets may be purchased from the driver or at the ticket machine at the bus stop. The "Conference ticket", which is included in the price of accommodation if the booking is made through the Bonn Tourism and Congress Office (see below), may be used for this bus.

From Frankfurt airport to Bonn city centre

Participants arriving at Frankfurt airport should go to the Frankfurt airport long-distance railway station, which is reached by following the signs to *Frankfurt Flughafen Fernbahnhof* (Frankfurt airport long-distance railway station). This station is in the AIRail Terminal, next to Terminal 1. Trains arrive at and depart from platforms 4 to 7. Participants are recommended to travel either by high-speed InterCity-Express (ICE) train to Siegburg/Bonn or by direct Intercity (IC)/Eurocity (EC) train to Bonn central station (Bonn Hauptbahnhof).

High-speed ICE trains to Siegburg/Bonn or IC/EC trains to Bonn central station leave from the Frankfurt airport long-distance railway station two or three times every hour between 5 a.m. and 9 p.m. The high-speed ICE train journey to Siegburg/Bonn takes 40 minutes. Trains leave at least once an hour. The IC/EC train goes directly to Bonn central station (in the centre of Bonn); the journey time is between 1½ and 2 hours. For additional information, please check: <www.bahn.de>.

From Siegburg/Bonn railway station to Bonn city centre

Passengers travelling to Bonn via Siegburg/Bonn ICE station should change at Siegburg/Bonn station onto the local tram (Telekom Express line 66), which leaves every ten minutes. To reach the tram, passengers will have a seven-minute walk (clearly marked) from the ICE platform to tram 66.

Journey time into the centre of Bonn is about 30 minutes. Tickets can be purchased on the tram. A one-way journey by taxi from Siegburg to Bonn costs approximately EUR 35.

From the main railway station (Hauptbahnhof) in Bonn to the World Conference Center Bonn

Participants travelling by public transport from Bonn to the United Nations Campus and the WCCB may use either bus or underground train (U-Bahn).

Bus lines 610 and 611 (direction Heiderhof/Pappelweg) pass near the United Nations Campus and the WCCB; participants should alight at the *Deutsche Welle* bus stop.

The underground (U-Bahn) lines 16, 63 and 66 (direction Bad Godesberg, Bad Honnef and Königswinter, respectively) also stop near the WCCB; participants should alight at the *Heussallee/Museumsmeile* stop, follow the sign for "Heussallee" and walk down that road for approximately 5–10 minutes. The United Nations Campus and the WCCB are at the end of Heussallee.

6. Hotel accommodation

Hotel bookings should be made directly by participants. Reservations for hotel rooms may be made through the Bonn Tourism and Congress Office, using the following link:

<http://www.bonn-region.de/events/cric13.html >

Alternatively, bookings may be made by contacting the Bonn Tourism and Congress Office at:

Tourismus & Congress GmbH
Region Bonn/Rhein-Sieg/Ahrweiler im WorldCCBonn
Platz der Vereinten Nationen 2
D-53113 Bonn, Germany
Hotel Reservation Department
Hotline: + 49 228 910 4133
E-mail: a.isengard@bonn-region.de
(Monday to Friday: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.)

All bookings made through the Bonn Tourism and Congress Office include a "Conference ticket", which is valid on public transport in Bonn for the duration of the stay. This ticket is not transferable and will be issued together with the hotel reservation confirmation mail as a printable PDF document. Please do not forget to print out your ticket and to bring it with you.

7. Services available for participants at the conference venue

Information on medical services and emergency numbers, postal, telephone, fax, photocopying and Internet services, cafeteria and bars, banking services, travel agency and any other additional services available for participants will be published in the Official Journal of the session.

It is to be noted that the present CRIC session will be paperless. Accordingly, official documents of the session or its Official Journal will not be printed and distributed but made available electronically on the UNCCD website at:

<www.unccd.int/en/about-the-convention/officialdocuments/Pages/SessionDisplay.aspx?k=CRIC(13)>

8. Immigration formalities and customs regulations

The Government of Germany has advised that immigration formalities will be facilitated at its embassies or consulates. Applications may be submitted, referring to the Committee session, to the competent German embassy or consulate.[3]

European Union nationals do not require a visa to enter the Federal Republic of Germany.

Generally speaking, all other foreigners require a visa for stays in Germany. A visa is not required for visits of up to 90 days in any 180-day period for nationals of those countries for which the European Community has abolished the visa requirement.[4]

As a rule, applicants must submit visa applications, together with all necessary documents, in person at the German mission responsible for their place of residence. In order to avoid time-consuming requests for additional information or documentation, applicants should consult the website of the respective mission well in advance of their departure date to find out about the visa procedure and about the documentation which has to be submitted. Visa application forms can be obtained from the mission free of charge (in the local language).[5] The forms submitted must be original versions in the appropriate language of the mission in question.

Visa fees are waived for United Nations conference participants.

As a rule, missions require between two and ten working days to make a decision on an application for a short-stay visa.

In addition, many German missions have introduced an electronic appointment system to help manage the number of visitors to the mission and thus shorten waiting times. Please note that some Embassies are booked for several weeks in advance. Exceptional appointments are limited and cannot be guaranteed, even if the conference is supported by the Federal Foreign Office, Department VN09. In urgent cases please contact the Head of the Visa Section of the German mission in charge directly and immediately (e-mail: info@*city*.diplo.de; website: <www.*city*.diplo.de>).

The online application system "Videx"[6] enables applicants to complete their application form for a Schengen visa online. The application cannot, however, be submitted online. It has to be printed out and submitted in person to the responsible embassy, consulate or external service provider, where the data will be scanned. This eases the process and ensures that the application is complete.

Further information on the procedure and details of the documents to be presented are available on the website of the competent German embassy or directly from the embassy itself. Participants are advised to contact the German embassy as soon as possible.

Information on customs regulations in force in Germany may be obtained from any German embassy or consulate.

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[3] Please check the following website in order to find the competent German mission: <www.auswaertiges-amt.de/EN/Startseite_node.html>.

[4] You will find an overview of visa requirements here: <www.auswaertiges-amt.de/EN/EinreiseUndAufenthalt/StaatenlisteVisumpflicht_node.html>.

[5] Applicants may also download the forms here: <www.auswaertigesamt.de/cae/servlet/contentblob/480874/>.

[6] "Videx" can be accessed at <https://videx.diplo.de>.

9. Intervention at official meetings

By resolution 64/230 on the Pattern of Conferences and the report of the Fifth Committee to the General Assembly (document A/64/580), the General Assembly reiterates its request to ensure the provision of high-quality conference services to Member States and other participants in official United Nations meetings.

In the interest of the smooth running of the meetings, participants need to maintain a normal speed when delivering speeches or making statements, so that the provision of the required high-quality simultaneous interpretation services can be achieved to the entire satisfaction of all concerned.

10. Side events and exhibition facilities

Due to the limited availability of funding and space, the current session will not organize side events nor provide exhibition facilities.

11. Press centre/information for the media

For information concerning accreditation, please contact:

Ms. Wagaki Mwangi
Secretariat of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
Langer Eugen
Hermann-Ehlers-Strasse 10
53113 Bonn, Germany
Tel.: + 49 228 815 2820
Fax: + 49 228 815 2898/99
E-mail: wmwangi@unccd.int

12. General information about the conference venue

Information about Bonn

Useful information about the city of Bonn, including accommodation, transport and other services and facilities, can be found at <http://www.bonn-region.de>.

Currency

EUR 1 = approximately USD 1.22 (indicative rate January 2015)

Weather

The month of March is characterized by *rising* daily high temperatures, with daily highs increasing from 9°C to 14°C over the course of the month. Throughout March, the most common forms of precipitation are moderate rain and light rain; participants are therefore recommended to bring an umbrella. Coat racks will be available next to the Plenary Hall.

Electricity

Electricity: 220 volts; 50 Hz European plugs with two round metal pins are used.

Local time

GMT + 1 hour.

Further information is available on the UNCCD home page at <www.unccd.int>.